

## HOME READING.

## THE COUNTRY CHOIR.

Oh, I'm singing  
The double bass!  
And a humbly  
With arms akimbo,  
And feet in the face,  
And I'll be tenor,  
For don't you see  
The perfectly lovely  
Black mustache  
That grows on me?  
At that the soprano  
Piped up higher,  
Quavering and trilling  
Like a teakettle  
Over the fire.  
The alto's voice  
Came following low:  
Far down in a well  
Was her "do, re, mi,"  
And "fa, sol, la, si, do!"  
The blondest bee  
You ever met,  
Kept all together,  
In key and measure,  
On the clarinet.  
Their wayside church  
Was a lilac bush;  
They sang there week days,  
They sang there Sundays—  
Hush—oh, hush!  
They are singing now  
In the fragrant place,  
Alto, soprano,  
Clarinet, tenor,  
And double bass!  
—From the Youth's Companion.

JOEL.  
A STORY OF DUTY.

In the middle of a dark night, Joel, a boy of nine years old, heard his name called by a voice which, through his sleep, seemed miles away. Joel had not been to bed when he went to bed, and he had not gone to sleep for some time; his heart beat so at the idea of his mother being ill. He well remembered his father's death, and his mother's illness now revived some feelings which he had almost forgotten. His mother was merely some clothes spread on a bed, and covered with a rug; but he did not mind that; and he could have been asleep at once, but for the fear that had come over him. When he did see his mother, he was so glad that his mother's feeble voice calling him seemed like a call from miles away.

In a minute Joel was up and wide awake.

"Light the candle," he could just hear his mother say.

He lighted the candle, and his beating heart seemed to stop when he saw his mother's face. He seemed hardly to know whether it was his mother or no.

"Shall I call?"

"Call nobody, my dear. Come here," he said, his cheek to hers.

"Mother, you are dying," he murmured.

"Yes, love, I am dying. It is no use doing any one. These little ones, Joel."

"I will take care of them, mother."

"You, my child? How should that be?"

"Why not?" said the boy, raising himself and standing at his best height.

"Look at me, mother, I can work, I promise you."

"His mother could not lift her hand, but she moved a finger in a way which checked him."

"I promise nothing that may be too hard afterward," she said.

"I promise to try then," he said; "that little sister shall live at home, and never go to the work-house."

He spoke cheerfully, though the candle-light glittered in the two streams of tears on his cheeks.

"We can go on living here; and I shall be so."

It would not do. The sense of their coming desolation rushed over him in a way too terrible to be borne. He had his head buried in his mother's neck, and he sobbed.

"Mother, mother!"

His mother found strength to move her head now. She stroked his head with a trembling touch, which he seemed to feel as long as he lived. She could not say more.

She told him she had no more for any of them. They would be taken care of. She advised him not to weep on the other side of her, and begged him to lie down himself till daylight, and try to sleep, when she should be gone.

This was the last thing she said. The candle was very low; but before it went out, she was gone. Joel had always loved what his mother wished; but he could not obey her in the last thing she said. He lighted another candle when the first went out, and sat thinking, till the gray dawn began to show through the window.

When he called the neighbors, they were astonished at his quietness. He had taken up the children and dressed them, and made the room tidy, and had the fire, before he told anybody what had happened. And when he opened the door, his little sister was in bed.

She was two years old, and he had to be of course; but she liked being with her mother, and she liked being with Joel.

He stood with his head buried in his mother's neck, and he sobbed.

He was wondering that his mother lay so long.

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did it, and looked accordingly at every opportunity. He certainly fed the children well; and himself, too. He knew that everything depended on his strength being kept up. His sister sat on his knee to be fed till she could feed herself. He was sorry to give it up; but he said she must learn to behave. So he smoothed her hair, and washed her face before dinner, and showed her how to fold her hands while he said grace. He took as much pains to train her to good manners at table as if he had been a governess, teaching a little lady. While she remained a "baby" he slept in the middle of the bed, between the two, that she might have room, and not be disturbed; and when she ceased to be a baby, he denied himself a bed, which he much wanted, in order to buy a considerable quantity of coarse dark calico, which, with his own hands, he made into a curtain, and slung up across a part of the room; thus shutting off about a third of it. Here he contrived to make up a little bed for his sister; and he was not satisfied till she had a basin and jug, and piece of soap of her own. Here nobody would have been to intrude upon her without leave; and, indeed, he always made her understand that he came only to take care of her. It was not only that Willy was not to see her undressed, but a neighbor or two now and then lifted the latch without knocking. One of these one day heard something from behind the curtain which made her call her husband silently to listen; and they always afterward treated Joel as if he was a man, and one whom they looked up to. He was teaching the child her little prayer. The earnest, sweet, devout tones by the boy, and the innocent, cheerful imitation of the little one, were beautiful to hear, the listeners said.

Though so well taken care of, she was not to be pampered there would have been no kindness to that. Very early, indeed, she was taught, in a merry sort of way, to put things in their places, and to sweep the floor, and to wash up the crockery. She was a handy little thing, well trained and docile. One reward that Joel had for his management was, that she was early fit to go to chapel. This was a great point; as he, choosing Willy regularly, could not go till he could take the little girl with him. She was never known to be restless; and Joel was quite proud of her.

Willy was not neglected for the little girl's sake. In those days children went earlier to the factory, and worked longer than they do now, and by the time the sister was five years old, Willy became a factory boy; and his pay put the little girl to school. When she, at seven, went to the factory, too, Joel's life was altogether an easier one. He always had maintained them all, from the day of his mother's death. The times must have been good—work constant and wages steady—or he could not have done it. Now, when all three were earning, he put his sister to a sewing-school for two evenings in the week, and the Saturday afternoons; and he and Willy attended an evening school, as they found they could afford it. He always escorted the little girl wherever she had to go: into the factory, and home again, to the school door and home again, and to the Sunday-school; yet he was himself remarkably punctual at work and at worship. He was a humble, earnest, docile pupil himself at the Sunday-school, quite unconscious that he was more advanced than other boys in the sublime science and practice of duty. He felt that everybody was very kind to him, but he was unaware that others felt it an honor to be kind to him.

I think these years, when he was a fine growing lad, in a state of high content. I linger, unwilling to proceed. But the end must come; and it is soon told. He was sixteen, I think, when he was asked to become a teacher in the Sunday-school, while not wholly ceasing to be a scholar. He tried, and made a capital teacher, and he won the hearts of the children while trying to open their minds. By this he became more widely known than before.

One day in the next year, a tremendous clatter and crash was heard in the factory where Joel worked. A dead silence succeeded, and then several called out that it was only an iron bar that had fallen down. This was true; but the iron bar had fallen on Joel's head, and he was taken up dead.

Such a funeral as his is rarely seen. There is something that strikes on all hearts in the spectacle of a soldier's funeral—the drum, the march of comrades, and the belt and cap laid on the coffin. But there was something more solemn and more moving than all such observance in the funeral of this young soldier, who had so bravely filled his place in the conflict of life. There was a street was filled from end to end. For relief, there were his brother and sister; and for a solemn dirge, the uncontrollable groans of a heart-stricken multitude.

—Every Other Saturday.

A BOW bent at last waxeth weak.

A CIVIL denial is better than a rude grant.

A GOOD cause makes a stout heart and a strong arm.

A DAY to come shows longer than a year that's gone.

THE mind is the atmosphere of the soul.

A BLUNT edge will sometimes do what a sharp edge will not.

REASON lies between the spur and the bridle.—George Herbert.

A FOOL may make money, but it requires a wise man to spend it.

A MAN, as he manages himself, may die old at thirty or young at eighty.

WHEN flattery is unsuccessful, it is but the fault of the flatterer.—Lecis.

YOUTH is a continual intoxication, the fever of reason.—La Rochefoucauld.

A GOOD surgeon must have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart and a lady's hand.

THE cup of pleasure sometimes has dregs that one must drink long afterwards.—Ouida.

A LARGE mass of error is easily embalmied and perpetuated by a little truth.

Charles Mackay.

TRULY a thinking man is the worst enemy the Prince of Darkness can have.

—Thomas Carlyle.

THAT virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarce worth the sentinel.

Oliver Goldsmith.

A GREAT name is like an eternal epitaph engraved by the admiration of men on the road of time.—E. Souvestre.

FAITH affirms many things respecting which the senses are silent, but nothing that they can deny.—Charles Pascal.

EVEN more than for the happiness of our youth do we long in old age for the desires of our youth to return.—Marie Eschenbach.

## The Vanished Paper Collar.

Did anybody ever notice how quickly the paper collar dropped out of sight? One can remember, and it is not so many years ago, when the paper collar held a mighty sway, except in the summer, when the heat made it soft at the back of the neck, and caused the corners under the chin to turn and assume a brownish hue. It was in general demand, and the thirteen and one-half neck man and seventeen and one-half neck man alike carried a fifteen or twenty-cent box home under his arm rejoicing. There were several large factories there employing numerous hands, and not only the clothing and dry goods, but cigar and grocery stores kept the collars for sale. You could get straight paper or linen finish, just as you called for it, and you were not at any expense for laundrying. If a man was a little hard up for cash, and the weather was a very fine day, he could turn his collar inside out, and But those days are gone, the factories are gone, and nearly all the paper collars are gone. You rarely see them now, except in auction stores or upon some country dandy who comes to town with a white band around his neck over a check shirt. Cheap linen and laundrying have driven the paper collar to the wall.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

HOW THE OLD MASTERS ARE IMITATED. Old canvases are imitated by covering the fresh painting with a paste, and subsequently baking the whole scientifically in an oven until the proper ancient tinge appears and the cracks of the varnish are sufficiently multiplied. Mellow tones are produced with licorice juice, and sombre tints with lamp-black. Fly specks are counterfeited by billiping the end of a camel's hair brush dipped in a mixture of gum and sepia, so that a shower of infinitesimal black drops are flung upon the canvas. Signatures are counterfeited by very learned experts in the history and literature of painting; men thoroughly acquainted with all the monomanias of celebrated masters, and able to imitate any painted signature with "steelying" exactitude. These are called monogrammatists. Old ink stains are imitated by rubbing the canvas with a damp cloth, so as to produce a peculiar mould upon the varnish. This trick is called a chanci. Imitating the after-strokes, or corrections of contours, made by certain famous painters, is styled "making a repentir."

MEZZORANTI's hitherto unique position among linguists, says the *Moscow Gazette*, is threatened by a young Russian officer, who, at the age of twenty-six years, has mastered the French, German, English, Danish, Swedish, Italian, Polish, Finnish, Serbian, Czech, Japanese, Chinese and Malay languages. Besides these he is acquainted with three different Japanese, one South African and two Chinese dialects, and is at present occupied with the study of Hebrew. M. Pakovitch has, with the exception of French, English and German, acquired the knowledge of these languages without any help, after his own method. Mezzoranti lived till he was seventy-five, and before he died he spoke fifty-eight tongues.

Violent Deaths in India.—An official report states that the total number of persons killed by wild animals and snakes in India last year was 22,125 against 21,427 in the previous year. Of these 2,609 were killed by wild animals, and 19,516 by snakes. Of the former 885 were caused by tigers, 278 by wolves, 207 by leopards, 359 by jackals, and 202 by alligators.

List of Letters Remaining unclaimed in the Post Office at Bloomfield, N. J., on Wednesday, March 19th, 1884.

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